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A. M. D. G.

THE ANGEL OF CONSOLATION.

Continued from page 520.

CHAPTER X.

A deep silence succeeded their prayer, interrupted only by the sighs and tears of Marian, Rosalia, and the others who were present. The pastor sprinkled holy water over the lifeless body, and immediately commenced the *De profundis*.

This duty ended, he went to acquaint M. Marcet of the sad event, and to dispose her to resignation. The unfortunate mother had just recovered from her late indisposition, and her first words were, "Virginia, my dear Virginia! Where are you, my child?" The venerable old man seated himself by her side, and a solitary tear trickled down his furrowed cheek.

"Well," said the lady, in a feeble and trembling voice.

"Madam, we must raise our thoughts to heaven."

"My daughter"——

"God has called her to himself; it is another sacrifice to add to those the Lord has already required of you. Virginia is no longer in this vale of tears, and her last moments—the dear child—were those of an angel."

M. Marcet threw herself on her knees, and remained motionless—Nature and Faith struggling in her breast. "Great God," said she, with emotion, after some moments of silence, "of all the objects of my love here below, my Virginia alone remained to me. Thou hast taken this source of happiness away, which so far, in thy goodness, thou hadst spared me. *Hallowed be thy holy name!*" She wished to go and embrace once more the lifeless remains of her child, so loved, and so worthy of her love. But, on entering the chamber, an extraordinary tremor spread over her frame. She advanced to the bed, where lay the daughter of a now childless mother, and sank down, exclaiming aloud, "Virginia! Virginia!"

They were obliged to separate her from the source of her grief; and accordingly they carried her to her own apartments, where she requested to be left alone. The priest, before taking leave, gave her his advice as to the dispositions with which she should bear up with everything, and as to the necessary funeral arrangements; and he placed before her mind the sorrows of Mary's maternal heart, whilst she stood at the foot of the cross, witnessing the last agony of her Jesus—her so dearly beloved Son.

M. Marcet remained in her chamber till the day of her funeral, when, believing herself sufficiently strong to be present at the sad ceremony, she wished to accompany the body of her daughter to the church of Mareuil.

Mathurin and Marian were so strongly opposed to this, that she gave up the project, and Jacqueline agreed to wait upon her.

Meanwhile all the village of Beauval had come to pay their last regards to the daughter of their former lord. Young girls bore the coffin, which was covered with a white pall. On the top of this latter was strewn a quantity of flowers, symbolizing innocence and purity; and in the centre was placed a crown of everlasting, in sign of a happy eternity.

It was autumn—the day was gloomy, the leaves were falling on every side: every object appeared to speak of decay. Rosalia walked behind the young girls, and her lamentations proved how deep was her sorrow—indeed, it was expected that it would be impossible to allow her to see the conclusion of these last sad duties to her friend. Old Marian, too, was there; in vain did she strive to stay the tears that affected so sensibly the hearts of every one present. Roger lent the support of his arm to the old servant, and at the other side, holding his father's hand, walked little James.

The pious Francis had asked permission to carry the cross, and walked in front. Mathurin and Philip were near the pastor of Mareuil, and joined him in the prayers. The trembling voice of the respected old priest increased the general emotion; and oftentimes the tears of Mathurin prevented him from continuing his singing.

A numerous concourse of peasants — men and women — followed. Every face seemed impressed with the scene—every mind fondly, yet sadly, dwelt upon the many good qualities of Miss Marcet, and, on the other hand, upon the exceeding misery of her mother. "To be so good, so rich, and to die so soon! To leave this life, before having been able to enjoy it; and, at the same time, having all the means of enjoyment! Riches, beauty, youth, are not then real goods. Upon earth we must not expect true happiness." Such reflections convinced them of

the vanity of human things, and disposed their hearts for more exalted considerations. Some prayed in a low voice, but the far greater number walked along without breathing a word, their hearts engaged in the salutary thoughts which the early bier of Miss Marcet could not fail to inspire. This relgious silence was interrupted only by the funeral chant, and the sad and solemn toll of the Mareuil bell, which now became faintly audible.

The procession moved along in this imposing manner, until it arrived at the church. Here the most Holy Sacrifice was offered up for the repose of the soul departed. The greatest recollection and the most ardent devotion reigned in the holy place. The peasants had never before witnessed so melting a scene; even those who had come so far without either faith or devotion, could not but return to themselves, and feel called to live better for the future. For who can be present at the burial of departed worth, and see the resigned sorrows of a friend, or the placid hope that beams on the features of the pastor, and not feel, as he walks away from the hallowed spot, that his heart is changed, and his stubbornness subdued.

When the body had been let down into the grave, all—whether parent or child—gave full way to their lamentations. Rosalia was upon her knees, and seemed unable either to rise, or to restrain her tears. Angelica, too, was kneeling by the grave. See, she holds in her hands the little crucifix which Virginia gave her as a consolation! How ardently does she press it to her heart, and pray for the eternal rest of her young benefactress!

When the rites were concluded, every one returned to the village. They spoke together upon their different feelings and reflections. No one could talk upon any subject save Virginia — her virtues, her riches. They saw how death steals upon us at every age, in every state of life. The wisest observed that the happiness of Virginia consisted in her having passed a Christian life from her earliest years, and in never having allowed herself to be dazzled by the false greatness of the world. "How different," thought they, "would she have been, had she counted upon a long life, and so have spent her time in dissipation and forgetfulness of God!"

Among the different persons that were thus walking back to Beauval, none excited more astonishment than Roger, who appeared deeply afflicted, and was moving quietly along in the company of his wife and children. They were accustomed to see him intoxicated, to hear him blaspheme—in short, to pass a life of the darkest wickedness; how, then, could they explain this exceeding great change?

Marian and the Mathurin family returned to the hall. Immediately M. Marcet perceived them, she sorrowfully exclaimed, "You come, I see, alone! then all is over." Her strength failed her for a moment, but recovering herself, she said she was resigned, she wished to submit to God's holy will. Her heart was bitterly afflicted, but she was not affected like those who have no hope beyond the grave. Her only desire was soon to rejoin her child; therefore, she would live henceforth only to merit heaven."

They could not listen to such accents without the deepest compassion. Marian, who was afraid that such emotions would seriously injure her mistress's health, (which was already far from settled,) proposed to her to quit Beauval for a time, and pay a visit to some of her friends, who lived in a neighbouring city. M. Marcet refused. However Marian and Mathurin together, so firmly impressed upon her mind that winter was approaching, that any communication with Beauval would then become almost impracticable, and that she would find great difficulty in going to mass, she at last consented.

The journey was fixed for the day following. The preparations were soon made, and Mathurin offered to conduct M. Marcet in his conveyance as far as the next city. Here she would find a more convenient carriage.

CHAPTER XI.

Whilst Mathurin was thus striving to turn aside all the recollections of the sad past, divine grace was powerfully affecting the heart of Roger. Overcome by the kindness of the generous lady, convinced by her reasonings, touched by her exhortations, he had at length taken his happy resolution at the tomb of Virginia. The demise of this young lady had deeply moved his soul, and triumphed over whatever of the old man yet remained to be vanquished. He had assisted at the funeral with recollection—he had prayed—he was a changed man.

On his return to Beauval, he took (as we have seen) the hand of his wife, and engaged with a thousand different thoughts, it was a long time before he could unbosom himself. At last, breaking the ominous silence, he said, "Angelica, do you believe that God pardons me?"

"My dear Roger, can you doubt it?"

"Remember how wicked I have been."

Angelica felt so great an interior satisfaction, that she was, as it were, out of herself; and she remained some time without making any reply.

"There is still hope for me, then?" added Roger.

"Hope! there is more than ever: God calls you, my dear Roger; it is not to reject you. He has touched your heart, and it is not to refuse it when you tender its affections."

"Ah, Angelica, I have gone too far in my thirty years' course of crime, ever to expect pardon. I see my misery. God wishes to punish me, and to leave me nought but despair."

"Calm yourself," replied Angelica; "when we get home to our cottage, I will read you an extract—a very apt one—from a book with which M. Marcet presented me. I have too much confidence in the goodness of God, not to expect to have the gratification of seeing peace and consolation once more illumine your breast."

On their return to the cottage, Angelica related, in a few words, to Margaret the sad details of the funeral; and then proposed to recite the *De profundis* for Virginia. The little crucifix was placed upon the chimney-piece, and Roger with all his family, for the first time, fell upon their knees, and fervently prayed for the kind deceased.

"Listen, Roger," said Angelica, at the end of their prayer, "and see if you may not throw yourself with confidence into the arms of the divine mercy."

She took up the book presented to her by M. Marcet, and read aloud the following passage:

"Sinners, ye who have not confidence in your God, whence your fears? whence your terror? What! Do you imagine that the shepherd, who runs after the strayed sheep, is capable of rejecting that sheep on its voluntary return? You accuse him of maltreating that after which he seeks with anxious affection. You tax him with shutting the gate of the sheep-fold against those who have abandoned it. Can you conceive that the good shepherd devotes to eternal death the dear lambs for whom he came upon earth, and suffered death? Your sins, 'tis true, are innumerable—your crimes horrifying. You are, therefore, the prodigal child, who have deserted and dishonoured the tenderest of fathers. You have abused your liberty—you have long wallowed in impurity—you have grown weary of the way of iniquity, and you would resume the path of virtue. That you may form your determination, see how the prodigal is received, and be assured that you will meet with the same reception. They come together—he meets with no reprimand—he hears not a word of reproach. Instead of a countenance inflamed with passion, he sees the eyes of his father bathed in tears. He wishes to fall upon his knees, but he is raised up. He asks pardon: '*My father*,' says he, '*I have sinned against you.*' The father, whom joy prevents from speaking, answers only by a most tender embrace, and by bedewing with his tears the cheek of his son. He then takes him by the hand, and introduces him into his house; he clothes him with the most magnificent garments, and puts a precious ring on his finger—a figure of all the rights which his son recovers. What is it that causes his transports of joy? He had lost his son, and he recovers him on this auspicious day. '*Thus*,' concludes God himself, '*is there joy in heaven upon one sinner doing penance.*'"

Roger needed no further confirmation; he stood converted. He walked to Margaret's couch, tenderly embraced her, and asked her pardon for all the sufferings which he had inflicted on her. He then threw his arms round the neck of his wife, exclaiming, "My dear Angelica, I owe you all: henceforth I will work for your happiness." He next embraced his children, and gave to each his benediction. The next day he went to the pastor of Mareuil, and became reconciled with that God, whom he had offended since his youth.

CHAPTER XII.

How adorable are the ways of the Lord! Roger, the disgrace of Beauval—he, who had lived only to offend his Almighty Creator—who had been the curse and the shame of his family, was entirely changed, and became a faithful, patient, and resigned Christian. Precipitated from an honourable sufficiency to the deepest misery, he had found in his very misery a means of salvation: for had not the hand of God stricken him, he might have continued in his wanderings—had he preserved the property left by his father, or never experienced the rigours of privation, he would probably never have seen this day.

Peace abode at last with this poor family; and the charities of M. Marcet having restored comfort to the dwelling, Roger began to experience a happiness to which, so far, he had been a perfect stranger. He worked every day as much as he could; he gained very little, 'tis true, but with the assistance of James and Annette's contributions, and with great economy, he could provide a living for himself and family. When he returned from work, his children would run and embrace him, and call him by the sweet name of father. Angelica knew not how to express her satisfaction; she tendered her most affectionate attentions, and neglected nothing that depended upon her to render less heavy the fatigues he had to undergo.

Margaret greatly repented of having so long despaired of the interference of Providence, and of having enraged Roger by her impatience. She now repaired her faults by her sweetness towards her son-in-law, and the constancy with which she bore up with her own infirmities. The house which had so long been the abode of affliction and tears, now wore the aspect of happiness. The most perfect unison existed between all its members, and Roger tasted a peace and tranquillity, of which, lately, he could have formed no conception.

Every Sunday the family went to mass at Mareuil; and immediately that was concluded, they ever walked to the cemetery to the tomb of Virginia, where they breathed a fervent prayer. The rest of the day Roger passed with his dear Angelica and his children, who seemed to show worthy fruits of the care which their good mother had lavished upon them.

Nevertheless, this calm will not last long. The corn became every day more scarce, and consequently more dear. The farmer, by whom Roger was employed, wished to lower his salary. At present, this was too inconsiderable, and incapable of supporting his family; however, he was obliged to submit. He resolved to become yet more economical, and to stint himself a little as to food.

One evening, as he was conversing with Angelica upon the unfortunate state of the times, little James returned home in tears. It was some moments before he could speak. "Alas!" said he at length,

"they do not require my services any more! They have dismissed me. What will become of us?"

"What," said Angelica, "the farmer of Grand-pré?"

"I had scarcely arrived," rejoined the boy, his words interrupted by heavy sighs, "I had scarce arrived, when he came up to me and said, 'You hardly bring me in as much as will feed you.'

"'Sir, I do what I am able, and I will come earlier in the morning, if you wish me.'

"'Of what use is it? I have little work that I can give you. Besides, bread is so dear, that I cannot think of supporting you for your work.'

"'What will then become of me?'

"'You must do as others do. I cannot ruin myself for such brats as you.'

"This evening he told me that I need not go again in the morning." At these words the poor little child burst into tears, and wept bitterly.

Roger endeavoured to console him. He would not complain, for he deserved much greater sufferings. But what caused so much anxiety in him was his beloved family. He could not bear to see Angelica deprived of any comfort—she who had already suffered so much, and was so good and kind.

Angelica, on her part, sought only to console her husband, and to cause him the least possible privation. Every evening she read aloud a chapter from M. Marcet's book, and all found the succours which religion proffers to the wretched, powerful motives for resignation and patience. Thus, despite their misery, they were contented and submissive: thus, the sweet affection of heart which reigned amongst them, rendered their misfortune supportable. They mutually assisted and consoled each other, and their prayers arose together with one voice. Their sole desire was the return of M. Marcet.

Nevertheless, the winter was becoming more rigorous, and the dearth increased daily. The bread was dear, and that was of a very inferior quality. Neither Roger nor Angelica would go and ask an alms in the village, there were already so many poor. They knew very little of Mathurin; and, besides, he had not too much to support his own family. The priest of Mareuil had given them what little assistance he could; but it was not possible for him to continue it, for he had to attend to his parishioners, amongst whom were many poor and destitute. They could not, however, die of hunger, and Angelica proposed to Roger to write to M. Marcet, and inform her of their misery. Roger approved of it; and Angelica sent the following lines to her benefactress:

"M. Marcet,

"You have already saved our lives; but we yet need your assistance. Misery is at its height in Beauval; my husband gains but little, and we have seven mouths to supply with food. Excuse, Madam, my boldness in thus writing to you to inform you of our wretchedness. You are our providence here below; my children have learned to bless your name; and every day we pray the Lord to shower down upon you his choicest favours. Roger prays with us; he is patient and resigned. Ah! Madam, if we had barely sufficient to support us, we should esteem ourselves but too happy.

"Angelica."

Roger, too, would himself write a few words to express his gratitude to M. Marcet, and to tell her that he submitted himself entirely to the will of Heaven; that he well knew how much he deserved every kind of chastisement, but he conjured her to take compassion on his family.

The letter finished, he set out for the post, which was about two leagues distant from Beauval. The family waited many days, subject to the most painful privations. Roger went often to the post, but he received no answer. One more day—it is past, and still no news. Hunger is raging; and it is necessary to sell a part of the furniture, which M. Marcet had given them.

This resource, too, soon failed.—Roger received no answer to his letter.

CHAPTER XIII.

One morning, on leaving his bed (it was his intention to go and sell it), Roger said, "*The Lord hath given, and the Lord takes away.* His holy name be blessed! Angelica, let us pray that God will receive our sufferings in expiation for our sins." Angelica could not sufficiently admire the firmness of her husband, and the surprising change which had been wrought in him. She felt more happy to see him in these holy dispositions, though in so much misery, than if she had recovered all her property.

The bed was about to be removed from the cottage, notwithstanding the remonstrances of Margaret (who wished hers to be taken first), when Mathurin entered. "Well," said he, "what is it you are doing now? Are you removing?"

Little James was the first to reply. "My father has no bread to give us, so he is going to sell his bed."

"No, no! by no means! Put all in their places again. Do not cry, my child, I am bringing you good news. M. Marcet intends to return very shortly."

"Shortly!" exclaimed the whole family; and joy instantly overspread every feature.

"Yes, soon. Here, see this letter; I have come early to read it to you. But I must, in the first place, complain of your conduct. How comes it that you want bread, and yet do not ask me for it? Do you think old Mathurin has a heart of stone? We are not rich, to be sure, and the times are very bad; but, God be praised, we can still relieve the needy. Quick, boy, run off, and ask Jacqueline to give you some bread for Roger's family."

Little Jimmy did not require a second order, and soon found himself at Mathurin's house.

"Now," added the old man, after the child had

gone, "I must read you this letter. Listen, there is a paragraph which regards you."

"My Dear Mathurin,

"I am a long way from you — yes, further than I thought of being. My friend here wished me to accompany her on a journey which she had purposed making, and, of course, I could not refuse. This prevents me from returning to Beauval; but I shall certainly be with you early next month. I have many schemes in my mind, which I want to see accomplished as soon as possible. I have given orders to my steward to give you what money you wish for distribution among the inhabitants of Beauval, which must be doubly wretched in this unhappy season. Take particular care of Roger and family, see that they want nothing. I shall learn with pleasure on my return, that Roger has become a good Christian. I trust he is so. Request them all to pray for my daughter and myself. Nothing is more acceptable to God than the prayers of the poor."

At this moment James returned with two loaves. Angelica immediately cut them up, and with a joyful heart distributed them to the family. Each eat his share with the greatest avidity. How clearly it bespoke their hunger! Mathurin was greatly affected at this sight of the poor family, and cast on all an eye of compassion. "Never omit," said he, "to come to my house, whenever you want anything. I will myself come and visit you. I wish I had done so earlier. For the present, good bye. James, always be careful to say your prayers well, and to obey your parents. You will soon be growing up, and become a great help and comfort to them." The good old man addressed a word of friendship or consolation to each, and then walked home with the sweet satisfaction of having restored peace and comfort to an unhappy family.

How cheering and beneficent is the influence of religion on mankind! If they are rich, it engages them to refer all to God, and to console their wretched brethren with the means which he has deposited in their hands. If they are poor, it points out to them a God in poverty and suffering—it displays to them a tender Father in heaven, who knows how to appreciate their pains and their sacrifices, and who will recompense them a hundredfold. It offers them, at the end of their course (which is never far distant), an incomprehensible happiness, an unfading crown of glory, a felicity without end—without measure!

CHAPTER XIV.

The return of M. Marcet would crown the happiness of Roger's family, and it was impatiently longed for. The feast of Easter had passed—spring was beginning to shed her gracious smiles over the country. This was the time when the good lady had promised to return.

She kept her word, and soon visited once more her little village. We cannot describe the emotion felt by this tender mother, when she found herself alone in her mansion: the memory of her daughter was excited by every object. Here she had been wont to sit—upon this path she loved to walk—in this chamber she passed her last sickness, and died. Every object, in short, drew her mind back to Virginia; and every time she thought on her, she made an opportunity of offering up an act of resignation and submission to the will of God.

Mathurin was the first to receive notice of M. Marcet's arrival; and he immediately went with all his family to pay his respects and congratulations, and they were received with the greatest kindness. The lady's first anxiety was to learn whether the poor had been well attended to. Mathurin gave her an account of his stewardship; but this benefactress of the hamlet considered that he had been too sparing. She next enquired after Roger, and proposed to go and see this interesting family that very day.

She informed Mathurin of her principal project, which was to build a chapel at Beauval, that the inhabitants might more easily practise their religion. The old man listened with eagerness to the plan—his only feeling was joy. Already he fancied himself in the choir of the new church, taking part in the ceremonies, and singing the office. "I ask only one thing of the Lord," said he, "that he will spare my life to see this glorious work executed." M. Marcet requested him to give notice of it to every one out of employ, that they might have an opportunity of getting work from the architect whom she had brought back with her.

On her arrival at Roger's cottage, she found the family united in peace and happiness. As she opened the door, all raised an exclamation of joy, and fell upon their knees. She bade them stand up, and spoke to them in the most affectionate manner. Roger's eyes were bathed in tears. "Now that I see you again, Madam," said he, "I may return you my thanks—I may express to you my gratitude. We owe you our lives; and I—I owe you much more."

"Roger, I can never make known to you how great my satisfaction was on reading your letter, and all the feelings I experience at seeing you here. I am persuaded that you do not repent of having changed your life. Have you any work now? What do you gain by it?"

"Not much, Madam," said Angelica; "he works hard, very hard, but his gains are not worth the trouble."

"Well, well, I am going to employ him more advantageously."

"And me, too, if you please, Madam," said little James; "I am now grown strong, and I could wish to give my mother something for keeping me."

"Do not trouble yourself, my little friend; we will find employment for you too. I intend, Roger, to make you work; and I reckon on you as my first

workman. It is proposed to rebuild the little church of Beauval."

At these words Roger changed colour. "The church of Beauval!" he ejaculated; "O my father! my father! Great God, have mercy on him!"

Angelica, astonished, gazed upon her husband, nor could she explain these exclamations. Roger covered his face with his hands, and seemed absorbed in thought. At length, breaking the silence, he said, "Great God! Thy judgments are righteous! Yes, the son must rebuild what the father destroyed. The son in his poverty must repair, by the sweat of his brow, what the father, already rich, pulled down to enrich himself more. Excuse my anxiety, Madam. Ah, if you knew all, perhaps, alas! you would wish to withdraw your favours."

"I know all, Roger; do not alarm yourself about it. Your father was unfortunate in allowing himself to be seduced by irreligion and love of money."

"Ah, Madam, I often think of this; this idea follows and troubles me. I often picture to myself his last moments. The very mention of a priest or a church produced upon him an almost incredible effect; but he was suddenly and unexpectedly stricken by God. He lay down upon his bed at night—in the morning he was no more! O God, have pity on him!"

"My dear Roger," said Angelica, "what you tell us is certainly awful, but we will endeavour to expiate it."

"Yes, God has blessed me in taking away my riches. He has proved his goodness in chastising me, and his love in plunging me into misery."

"Let us bless him altogether, said M. Marcet: "let us adore his all-powerful hand, whether it scatters favours or chastisement. In every situation let us put our trust in his tender and merciful providence."

Irreligion had fled for ever from Roger's cottage; and with it its inseparable companions—blasphemy, passion, and loose morals. He himself was happy, and his family too. His circumstances, which, in his wickedness, seemed intolerable, had become agreeable and even full of sweetness to him. He worked indefatigably at the building of the church; and James, with many of the inhabitants of Beauval, vied with each other in manifesting their zeal. They appeared to feel, at last, the necessity of returning to their religion.

The ceremony of the consecration of the church was performed as magnificently as circumstances would permit, and in the most touching manner. Thirty years of infidelity had not eradicated every principle of faith from the hearts of the congregation.

Mathurin was restored to the duties of clerk; and little James (the grandson of the most zealous church-destroyer) was the leading child in the choir of the new chapel. Francis (Mathurin's son) was installed, through the influence of M. Marcet, schoolmaster for the boys, and Marian for the girls.

By degrees the village entirely changed its features; morals became more pure, impiety was banished from the village. Integrity, justice, and all other virtues reigned supreme. In one word, Beauval became happy.

So great is the efficacy of faith—such is the kindly influence of religion, which alone in this life can satisfy the heart of man, and make it enjoy peace and happiness. Oh, that all wives would learn a lesson from Angelica! Oh, that ladies would not disdain to model their conduct on that of M. Marcet! If so, we should have much less crime, and many more *Angels of Consolation.*

Laus Deo, honorque Mariæ.

CARITAS.

(Concluded.)

GOOD SEWERAGE AND APPLICATION OF REFUSE.

AND now let us sum up briefly the results which might thus be approached in all cases, and completely attained in many. The whole excremental matter of a town, animal and vegetable, including the refuse of manufactories, aided by the rain, would be in constant progress of removal, from the moment of its being first deposited, in impermeable pipes, cut off from all communication with the atmosphere, by valves, flaps, and fresh water interposed. What would be the effect on the health of a dense population has unhappily not yet been proved by experience; it may, however, be surmised from these two facts, first that there are districts in the country, where the mere drainage of water has reduced the fogs to one-tenth of what they used to be within the memory of men now living; and secondly, that on a comparison of houses and districts, in which these points have been neglected or attended to, there are cases in which the rate of sickness and mortality is more than twice as great in one as in the other. There is, moreover, another result of incalculable importance, by no means to be passed over without mention. The refuse thus prevented from polluting our towns may be made a source of unlimited fertility to the country. Being completely collected and removed, before its decomposition has commenced, it is wholly applicable to the multiplying of the products of the soil, in proportion to the multiplying numbers of those who dwell in the land. And when we find that produce may be thus increased five-fold, and that the fertilising matter thus saved is applicable to arable as well as to pasture land; when we consider further that dense multitudes are enabled to enjoy plenty and health, both in Holland and in China, by means of the economy of waste manures, we shall be astonished to think of our own folly, in fetching guano from Africa and America, and letting our own lie to rot, and run to waste, and turn to pestilence, in the midst of our habitations; in expatriating our people to dwell in the ends of the earth, for lack of food, which we have the means of increasing indefinitely in our own country; and above all, in presuming to suppose, with the disciples of mistaken Malthus, that our Maker has not adequately provided for the wants of those whom he has commanded to increase and multiply, when he has so constituted the animal and vegetable world, that by the agency of a natural alchemy, the refuse of the one is capable, with due care on our part, of being constantly made the means of fertilising and fructifying the other, for its own perpetual renewal, and for the supply of food for man, perpetually increased in quantity, and renewed in pure, wholesome, and nutritious quality.—*Letters on the Unhealthy Condition of the Lower Class of Dwellings, by the Rector of Alderley.*

HUMILITY is the foundation of all virtues: therefore, in that soul in which it does not exist, there cannot be any virtue, excepting in mere appearance; in like manner, it is the most proper disposition for all heavenly gifts. In one word, it is so necessary for perfection, that amongst all the ways to arrive at it, the first is humility, the second is humility, the third *is* humility, and if a hundred times I were asked concerning this so many times should I answer the same thing.—S. AUGUSTIN.

"WE'LL SEE ABOUT IT."

BY MRS. S. C. HALL.

"WE'LL see about it!"—from that simple sentence has arisen more evil than any person, ignorant of the strange union of Impetuosity and Procrastination my countrymen exhibit, could well believe. They are sufficiently prompt and energetic where their feelings are concerned, but, in matters of business, they almost invariably prefer *seeing about* to DOING.

I shall not find it difficult to illustrate this observation:—from the many examples of its truth, in high and in low life, I select Philip Garraty.

Philip, and Philip's wife and Philip's children, and all of the house of Garraty, are employed from morning till night in *seeing about* every thing, and consequently, in *doing* nothing. There is Philip—a tall, handsome, good-humoured fellow, of about five-and-thirty, with broad, lazy-looking shoulders, and a smile perpetually lurking about his mouth, or in his bright hazel eyes—the picture of idolence and kindly feeling. There he is, leaning over what was once a five-barred gate, and leads to the haggart; his blue worsted stockings full of holes, which the suggan, twisted half way up the well-formed leg, fails to conceal; while his brogues (to use his own words) if they do let the water in, let it out again. With what unstudied elegance does he roll that knotted twine and then unroll it; varying his occupation, at times, by kicking the stones that once formed a wall, into the stagnant pool, scarcely large enough for full grown ducks to sail in. But let us first take a survey of the premises. The dwelling house is a long rambling abode, much larger than the generality of those that fall to the lot of small Irish farmers; but the fact is, that Philip rents one of the most extensive farms in the neighbourhood, and ought to be "well to do in the world." The dwelling looks very comfortless, notwithstanding: part of the thatch is much decayed, and the rank weeds and damp moss nearly cover it; the door posts are only united to the wall by a few scattered portions of clay and stone, and the door itself is hanging but by one hinge; the window frames shake in the passing wind, and some of the compartments are stuffed with the crown of a hat, or a "lock of straw"—very unsightly objects. At the opposite side of the swamp is the haggart gate, where a broken line of alternate palings and wall, exhibit proof that it had formerly been fenced in; the commodious barn is almost roofless, and the other sheds pretty much in the same condition; the pig-stye is deserted by the grubbling lady and her grunting progeny, who are too fond of an occasional repast in the once cultivated garden to remain in their proper abode; the listless turkeys, and contented half-fatted geese, live at large on the public; but the turkeys, with all their shyness and modesty, have the best of it—for they mount the illbuilt stacks, and select the grain, *a plaisir*.

"Give you good morrow, Mr. Philip; we have had showery weather lately." "Och, all manner o' joy to ye, my lady, and sure ye'll walk in, and sit down; my woman will be proud to see ye. I'm sartin we'll have the rain so on again, for it's every where, like bad luck; and my throat 's sore wid hurishing thim pigs out o' the garden—sorra' a thing can I do all day for watching thim." "Why do you not mend the door of the stye?" "True, for ye, Ma'm dear, so I would—if I had the nails, and I've been threatening to step down to Mickey Bow, the smith, to ask him to *see about it*." "I hear you've had a fine crop of wheat, Philip." "Thank God for all things! You may say that; we had, my lady, a fine crop—but I have always the height of ill luck somehow; upon my sowkins (and that's the hardest oath I swear) the turkeys have had the most of it: but I mean to *see about* setting it up safe to-morrow." "But Philip, I thought you sold the wheat, standing, to the steward at the big house." "It was all as one as sould, only it's a bad world, Madam dear, and I've no luck.—Says the steward to me, says he, I like to do things like a man of business; so, Mister Garraty, just draw up a bit of an agreement that you deliver over the wheat field to me, on sich a day, standing as it is, for sich a sum, and I'll sign it for ye, and thin there can be no mistake, only let me have it by this day week.—Well, to be sure I came home full o' my good luck, and I tould the wife; and on the strength of it she must have a new gown. And sure, says she, Miss Hennessy is just come from Dublin, wid a shop full o' goods, and on account that she's my brother's sister-in-law's first cousin, she'll let me have the first sight o' the things, and I can take my pick—and ye'll have plinty of time to *see about* the agreement to-morrow. Well, I don't know how it was, but the next day we had no paper, nor ink, nor pens in the house; I meant to send the gosson to Miss Hennessy's for all—but forgot the pens. So when I was *seeing about* the 'greement, I be-thought of the ould gander, and while I was pulling as beautiful a pen as ever ye laid ye'r two eyes upon, out of his wing, he tattered my hand with his bill in sich a manner, that sorra' a pen I could hould for three days. Well, one thing or another put it off for ever so long, and at last I wrote it out like print, and takes it myself to the steward.—Good evening to you Mr. Garraty, says he; good evening kindly, Sir, says I, and I hope the woman that owns ye, and all ye'r good family's well: all well, thank ye, Mr. Garraty, says he; I've got the 'greement here Sir, says I, pulling it out as I thought—but behould ye—I only cotcht the paper it was wrapt in, to keep it from the dirt of the tobacco that was loose in my pocket for want of a box—(saving ye'r presence); so I turned what little bits o' things I had in it out, and there was a great hole that he might drive all the parish rats through, at the bottom—which the wife promised to *see about* mending, as good as six months before. Well, I saw the sneer on his ugly mouth (for he's an Englishman), and I turned it off with a laugh, and said air holes are comfortable in hot weather, and, sich like jokes—and that I'd go home and make another 'greement. 'Greement for what? says he, laying down his grate outlandish pipe. Whew! may be ye don't know, says I. Not I, says he. The wheat field, says I. Why, says he; did'nt I tell you then, that you must bring the 'greement to me by that day week—and that was by the same token (pulling a red memorandum book out of his pocket), let me see—exactly this day three weeks. Do you think, Mr. Garraty, he goes on, that when ye didn't care to look after ye'r own interests, and I offering so fair for the field, I was going to wait upon you? I don't lose my paper in the Irish fashion. Well that last set me up—and so I axed him if it was the pattern of his English breeding, and one word brought on another; and all the blood in my body rushed into my fist—and I had the ill luck to knock him down—and the coward, what does he do but takes the law o' me—and I was cast—and lost the sale of the wheat—and was ordered to pay ever so much money: well, I didn't care to pay it then, but gave an engagement; and I meant to *see about it*—but forgot: and all in a giffy, came a thing they call an execution—and to stop the cant, I was forced to borrow money from that tame negur, the exciseman, who'd sell the sowl out of his grandmother for sixpence (if indeed there ever was a sowl in the family), and it is a terrible case to paying *interest* for it *still*."

"But, Philip, you may give up or dispose of part of your farm. I know you could get a good sum of money for that rich meadow by the river.

"True for ye ma'm dear—and I've been *seeing about it* for a long time—but somehow *I have no luck*. Jist as he came up, I was thinking to myself, that the gale day is passed, and all one as before, yara a pin's worth have I for the rint, and the landlord wants it as bad as I do, though it's a shame to say that of a gintleman; for jist as he was *seeing about* some ould custodium, or something of the sort, that had been hanging over the estate ever since he came to it, the sheriff's officers put *executioners* in the house; and it's very sorrowful for both of us, if I may make bould to say so; for I'm sartin he'll be racking me for the money—and indeed the ould huntsman tould me as much—but I must *see about it*: not indeed that it's much good—for I've no luck." "Let

me beg of you, Philip, not to take such an idea into your head; do *not lose* a moment; you will be utterly ruined if you do; why not apply to your father-in-law—he is able to assist you; for at present you only suffer from temporary embarrassment." "True for he—that's good advice, my lady; and by the blessing of God I'll *see about it*."

"Then go directly, Philip." "Directly—I can't ma'm dear—on account of the pigs: and sorra a one I have but myself to keep them out of the cabbages; for I let the woman and the grawls go to the pattern at Killaun; it's little pleasure they see, the craturs." But your wife did not hear the huntsman's story?" "Och, aye did she—but unless she could give me a sheaf o' bank notes, where would be the good of her staying—but I'll *see about it*." "Immediately then, Philip, think upon the ruin that may come—nay that *must* come if you *neglect* this matter: your wife too; your family reduced from comfort to starvation—your home desolate"—"Asy, my lady,—don't be after breaking my heart intirely; thank God I have seven as fine flahulugh children as ever peeled pratee, and all under twelve years old; and sure I'd lay down my life tin times over for every one o' them; and to-morrow for sartin—no—to-morrow the hurling; I can't to-morrow; but the day after, if I'm a living man, *I'll see about it*."

Poor Philip! his kindly feelings were valueless because of his unfortunate habit. Would that this were the only example I could produce of the ill effects of that dangerous little sentence—"*I'll see about it!*" Oh that the sons and daughters of the fairest island that ever heaved its green bosom above the surface of the ocean, would arise and *be doing* what is to be done, and never again rest contented with—"SEEING ABOUT IT."

A SINGER WITHOUT A VOICE.

Few of our readers who have reached middle life will not recollect the name of Mainvielle Fodor; many of them will remember her, as perhaps, the most extraordinary gifted female singer that ever graced the boards of our Italian opera. The range of her voice included two octaves and a half, its requisite quality was still more rare than the extent of its register; and her style, method, and expression have probably never been equalled, either before her time or since. Perhaps no better proof of this latter proposition can be offered than the fact that she gave equal felicity of expression, and an equally characteristic effect, to the profound sentiment and passion of Mozart, and the captivating brilliance of Rossini; which certainly cannot be said of any other prima donna of the last five-and-twenty years. During a period of ten years, Madame Mainvielle Fodor was the delight of all the musical dilettanti of Europe, and her success in certain characters was altogether without precedent. During one season at Vienna, she played *Semiramide* sixty times successfully, and to an equally numerous and delighted audience the sixtieth time as the first; and at Venice she played the *Elisabetta* of Caraffa thirty-eight times successively.—Perhaps the most extraordinary and affecting scene that was ever witnessed on a public stage was the one which closed the public career of this remarkable woman, at the *Italiens* in Paris, in the season of 1825. She was at that time at the height of her fame and popularity, and had, at the earnest solicitation of M. Sostheue de la Rochefoucault, refused a very lucrative engagement at Naples, and accepted one at Paris, on much less advantageous terms in a pecuniary point of view. The evening arrived for her to make her entree in *Semiramide*. The theatre was crowded from the floor to the ceiling; the whole musical world of Paris was present, and many of the musical celebrities of the rest of Europe, including Rossini, Cherubini, Choron, &c.; and every one looked for a degree of success never exceeded in the annals of song. The curtain drew up; the great actress—the Queen of Song—*la prima delle prime donne*, as the Italians called her—presented herself on the scene; and her majestic voice was as rich, radiant, and powerful as usual. She went through the first scene of the opera in a way which caused her exit to be greeted by ecstasies of delighted enthusiasm, amounting almost to delirium. At length she re-appeared, and proceeded with her part till the fifth or sixth bar of the first air, when suddenly the divine sounds of her voice entirely ceased—cold drops of perspiration started to her brow—her lips quivered, and her chest was violently agitated. But not a sound was heard! The orchestra ceased playing—the curtain was dropped—the house was in consternation, both before and behind the curtain. In the former, the agitation was in some measure calmed, by the acting manager stating that the sudden indisposition of Madame Mainvielle Fodor must cause the performance to be suspended *for a few minutes*; an announcement which in a great degree re-assured the audience, who judged from it that the indisposition was one of no moment. In the meantime, the dressing-room of the prima donna was a scene of indescribable confusion and dismay; for all present were convinced that her voice was utterly gone; and she herself exhibited her despairing belief that such was the case, by flinging her arms about in the wildest manner, striking her face, tearing her hair, and exhibiting every sign of distress but those audible cries which usually indicate mental suffering, but of which it was evident that she was now physically incapable. And the friends who were present were scarcely less incapacitated by their grief from expressing the amount of it. Rossini fairly wept; and Choron (who had a strong sense of religion) had fallen upon his knees, and was begging her to calm her agitation, and trust in God, who could never, he said, have given her so wonderful an organ only to destroy it in an instant, without apparent cause, and without warning. Meantime she uttered not a sound, and only replied to their tears and remonstrances by pressing the hand of each. By this time more than a quarter of an hour had elapsed, and the house was growing impatient, and even violent, in its demand to be informed of the singer's actual condition. At this moment the acting manager entered the dressing-room of Fodor, and stated the impossibility of any longer delaying to reply to the public impatience, and he added that he was about to announce to the audience that the performance could not proceed. The effect which this declaration produced on the sufferer was prodigious, and in some sort terrific.—The colour came to her face, her eyes flashed fire, she rose from where she had been sitting, her lips moved convulsively, and at length she cried out, in a loud, full, and resounding voice—"Draw up the curtain—I will sing!" "Saved! saved!" cried Rossini, embracing her. "Heaven has had pity on our grief!" exclaimed the pious Choron. The curtain was again raised—the theatre trembled with the shouts of applause that greeted the *cantatrice*—then a profound silence of expectant interest and curiosity succeeded, and she went through the remainder of the opera with an effect equal, if not superior, to anything that had ever before been heard from her. As the curtain fell on the last scene, the excited and exhausted singer fainted and fell to the ground. She speedily recovered, but again her voice was gone—never to return!—*Court Journal.*

THE EARLY CHURCH.

UNTO the East we turn—from the cold bourn
Of our dull western cave Faith's pensive mood
Sets there her tranced eye-lid, gathering food
Of solemn thoughts which make her less forlorn,
And back to apostolic men is borne.
There, from her evening and dim solitude,
She joins the companies of the wise and good,
Who walk upon the gospel's glorious morn—
Their dwarf dimensions of mortality
Seeming to grow upon the golden sky
Beyond the cold shade of imperious Rome:
Ambrose and Basil, either Gregory,
Clement and Cyril, Cyprian's earthly home,
And the free lips of glowing Chrysostom.

HART-LEAP WELL.

Hart-Leap Well is a small spring of water, about five miles from Richmond in Yorkshire, and near the side of the road that leads from Richmond to Askrigg. Its name is derived from a remarkable Chase, the memory of which is preserved by the monuments spoken of in the second Part of the following Poem, which monuments do now exist as I have there described them.

THE knight had ridden down from Wensley Moor
With the slow motion of a summer's cloud;
He turned aside to a vassal's door,
And "bring another horse!" he cried aloud.

"Another horse!"—That shout the vassal heard,
And saddled his best steed, a comely gray;
Sir Walter mounted him; he was the third
Which he had mounted on that glorious day.

Joy sparkled in the prancing courser's eyes;
The horse and horseman are a happy pair;
But, though Sir Walter like a falcon flies,
There is a doleful silence in the air.

A rout this morning left Sir Walter's hall,
That as they gallopped made the echoes roar;
But horse and man are vanished, one and all;
Such race, I think, was never seen before.

Sir Walter, restless as a veering wind,
Calls to the few tired dogs that yet remain:
Blanch, Swift, and Music, noblest of their kind,
Follow, and up the weary mountain strain.

The knight hallooed, he cheered and chid them on
With suppliant gestures and upbraidings stern;
But breath and eyesight fail; and, one by one,
The dogs are stretched among the mountain fern

Where is the throng, the tumult of the race?
The bugles that so joyfully were blown?
—This chase it looks not like an earthly chase;
Sir Walter and the Hart are left alone.

The poor Hart toils along the mountain side;
I will not stop to tell how far he fled,
Nor will I mention by what death he died;
But now the knight beholds him lying dead,

Dismounting then, he leaned against a thorn;
He had no follower, dog, nor man, nor boy;
He neither cracked his whip, nor blew his horn,
But gazed upon the spoil with silent joy.

Close to the thorn on which Sir Walter leaned
Stood his dumb partner in this glorious feat!
Weak as a lamb the hour that it is yeaned;
And white with foam as if with cleaving sleet.

Upon his side the Hart was lying stretched:
His nostril touched a spring beneath a hill,
And with the last deep groan his breath had fetch'd
The waters of the spring were trembling still.

And now, too happy for repose or rest,
(Never had living man such joyful lot!)
Sir Walter walked all round, north, south, and west,
And gazed and gazed upon that darling spot.

And climbing up the hill—(it was at least
Nine roods of sheer ascent) Sir Walter found
Three several hoof-marks which the hunted beast
Had left imprinted on the grassy ground.

Sir Walter wiped his face, and cried, "Till now
Such sight was never seen by living eyes:
Three leaps have borne him from this lofty brow,
Down to the very fountain where he lies.

I'll build a pleasure-house upon this spot,
And a small arbour, made for rural joy;
'Twill be the traveller's shed, the pilgrim's cot,
A place of love for damsels that are coy.

A cunning artist will I have to frame
A basin for that fountain in the dell!
And they who do make mention of the same,
From this day forth, shall call it HART-LEAP WELL.

And, gallant stag! to make thy praises known,
Another monument shall here be raised;
Three several pillars, each a rough-hewn stone,
And planted where thy hoofs the turf have grazed.

And, in the summer-time when days are long,
I will come hither with my paramour;
And with the dancers and the minstrel's song
We will make merry in that pleasant bower.

Till the foundations of the mountains fail
My mansion with its arbour shall endure;
The joy of them who till the fields of Swale,
And them who dwell among the woods of Ure!

Then home he went, and left the Hart, stone-dead.
With breathless nostrils stretched above the spring.
—Soon did the knight perform what he had said,
And far and wide the fame thereof did ring.

Ere thrice the moon into her port had steered,
A cup of stone received the living well;
Three pillars of rude stone Sir Walter reared,
And built a house of pleasure in the dell.

And near the fountain, flowers of stature tall
With trailing plants and trees were interwined,—
Which soon composed a little sylvan hall,
A leafy shelter from the sun and wind.

And thither, when the summer-days were long,
Sir Walter led his wondering paramour;
And with the dancers and the minstrel's song
Made merriment within that pleasant bower.

The knight, Sir Walter, died in course of time,
And his bones lie in his paternal vale.—
But there is matter for a second rhyme
And I to this would add another tale.

PART SECOND.

THE moving accident is not my trade;
To freeze the blood I have no ready arts:
'Tis my delight, alone in summer shade,
To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts.

As I from Hawes to Richmond did repair,
It chanced that I saw standing in a dell
Three aspens at three corners of a square;
And one, not four yards distant, near a well.

What this imported I could ill divine:
And, pulling now the rein my horse to stop,
I saw three pillars standing in a line,
The last stone pillar on a dark hill-top.

The trees were gray, with neither arms nor head;
Half-wasted the square mound of tawney green;
So that you just might say, as then I said,
"Here in old time the hand of man hath been."

I looked upon the hill both far and near,
More doleful place did never eye survey;
It seemed as if the spring-time came not here,
And nature here were willing to decay.

I stood in various thoughts and fancies lost,
When one, who was in shepherd's garb attired,
Came up the hollow:—Him did I accost,
And what this place might be I then inquired.

The shepherd stopped, and that same story told
Which in my former rhyme I have rehearsed.
"A jolly place," said he, "in times of old!
But something ails it now; the spot is curst.

You see these lifeless stumps of aspen wood—
Some say that they are beeches, others elms—
These were the bower; and here a mansion stood,
The finest palace of a hundred realms!

The arbour does its own condition tell;
You see the stones, the fountain and the stream;
But as to the great lodge! you might as well
Hunt half a day for a forgotten dream.

There's neither dog nor heifer, horse nor sheep,
Will wet his lips within that cup of stone;
And oftentimes, when all are fast asleep
This water doth send forth a dolorous groan.

Some say that here a murder has been done,
And blood cries out for blood: but for my part,
I've guessed, when I've been sitting in the sun,
That it was all for that unhappy hart.

What thoughts must through the creature's brain have past!
Even from the topmost stone, upon the steep,
Are but three bounds—and look, Sir, at this last—
—O master! it has been a cruel leap.

For thirteen hours he ran a desperate race;
And in my simple mind we cannot tell
What cause the hart might have to love this place,
And come and make his death-bed near the Well.

Here on the grass perhaps asleep he sank,
Lulled by this fountain in the summer-tide;
This water was perhaps the first he drank
When he had wandered from his mother's side.

In April here beneath the scented thorn
He heard the birds their morning carols sing;
And he, perhaps, for aught we know, was born
Not half a furlong from that self-same spring.

Now, here is neither grass nor pleasant shade;
The sun on drearier hollow never shone;
So will it be, as I have often said,
Till trees, and stones, and fountain, all are gone."

"Grey-headed shepherd, thou hast spoken well;
Small difference lies between thy creed and mine:
This beast not unobserved by Nature fell;
His death was mourned by sympathy divine.

The Being, that is in the clouds and air,
That is in the green leaves among the groves,
Maintains a deep and reverential care
For the unoffending creatures whom he loves.

The pleasure-house is dust:—behind, before,
This is no common waste, no common gloom;
But Nature, in due course of time, once more
Shall here put on her beauty and her bloom.

She leaves these objects to a slow decay,
That what we are, and have been, may be known;
But, at the coming of the milder day,
These monuments shall all be overgrown.

One lesson, shepherd, let us two divide,
Taught both by what she shows, and what conceals,
Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels."

WORDSWORTH.

SUPERIORITY OF DISCIPLINE TO ENTHUSIASM.

ONE of the most certain of all lessons of military history, although some writers have neglected it, and some have even disputed it, is the superiority of discipline to enthusiasm. Much serious mischief has been done by an ignorance or disbelief of this truth; and if ever the French had landed in this country in the early party of the late war, we might have been taught it by a bitter experience. The defeat of Cope's army by the Highlanders at Preston Pans is no exception to this rule, for it was not the enthusiasm of the Highlanders which won the day, but their novel manner of fighting which perplexed their enemies; and the Highlanders had besides a discipline of their own which made them to a certain degree efficient soldiers. But as soon as the surprise was over, and an officer of even moderate ability was placed at the head of the royal army, the effect of the higher discipline and superior tactic of one of the regular armies of Europe became instantly visible, and the victory of Culloden was won with no difficulty. Even in France, where the natural genius of the people for war is greater than in any other country, and although the enthusiasm of the Vendeans was directed by officers of great ability, yet the arrival of the old soldiers of the garrison of Mentz immediately decided the contest, and gave them a defeat from which they could never recover. On the other hand, while not even the most military nations can become good soldiers without discipline, yet with discipline even the most unmilitary can be made efficient; of which no more striking instance can be given than the high military character of our Sepoy army in India. The first thing then to be done in all warfare, whether foreign or domestic, is to discipline our men, and till they are thoroughly disciplined to avoid above all things the exposing them to any general actions with the enemy.—*Dr. Arnold.*

A monk having once gone to visit the abbot Serapion, the latter begged of him that first of all they should pray together; but the monk, saying he was a sinner, and that he was not worthy to wear the habit, excused himself; upon which the abbot began to give him this advice: "My brother, if you wish to become perfect, remain working in your cell, and do not discourse much, because going round to see different people is not so profitable for you." At these words the monk was not a little disturbed; which the abbot perceiving said, "What is this, my brother? you have but just said that you are so great a sinner as to be unworthy to live; and yet now that I admonish you with charity to do that which is really needful for you, you are disturbed at me! if this be the case, it would appear that your humility is not true. If, indeed, you seriously wish to become humble, learn to receive admonitions with humility." At these words the monk entered into himself, and acknowledged his faults, and went away greatly edified.

When Joseph was tempted to commit sin, "How can I do this," said he, "and in the sight of God?" and the chaste Susannah, "It is better that I fall into your hands without fault, than that I should sin in the presence of God."

ON POTATOES.

ALTHOUGH the use of potatoes is now generally diffused among civilized nations, it is yet somewhat singular that the history of their introduction into Europe is still wrapped in mystery. We find them indeed, mentioned by Shakspeare in his 'Troilus and Cressida,' as appendages to the devil Luxury; and Falstaff is made to say, in the 'Merry Wives of Windsor,' "Let the sky rain potatoes" and "hail kissing comfits;" from which it has been supposed that they were well known in this country during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The plant there alluded to was, however, the "sweet Spanish potatoe," which was probably brought into Spain from some part of the East, as it is a native of India, and is spoken of by ancient writers under the name of *battatas*, which were at that time sold in our markets as a great delicacy, and were thought to possess extraordinary powers. They are, indeed, spoken of by old Gerard the English botanist, in his Herbal as "being roots which do strengthen and comfort nature, and are used to be eaten rosted in the ashes; some, when they be so rosted, infuse them and sop them in wine; others, to give them the greater grace in eating, do boyle them with prunes, and so eate them; likewise making these comfortable and delicate meates, called in shops *morselli placentulæ*, and divers others such-like."

The root which is the object of our present inquiry is indigenous in Chili, and the first notice taken of it by any European writer is by the German botanist Clusius, who in 1588, while residing in Vienna, received a present of two of the tubers from Flanders, under the name of *taratouflis*, of which there is a plate among his rare plants. The next mention of it is by Gerard, who describes it distinctly from the sweet potatoe, and says that the specimens were sent from Virginia, and planted in his garden near London, in 1597. They are, however, said to have been carried into Ireland by Sir Walter Raleigh, on his return from America, in 1586, and we are told in De Bry's Collection of Voyages, by Heriot, who accompanied him, that they are "good food either boiled or roasted, and are called by the Indians *openawk*. It is stated, however, by Humboldt, in his account of New Spain, that the potatoe was unknown in Mexico at the conquest of that country; and we are left to conjecture how it could have found its way across that wide intermediate territory to Virginia, to the soil of which it is naturally a stranger.

It appears by tradition that the roots were planted by Sir Walter at his residence near Youghal, which is still standing, and were soon afterwards found so useful in some disastrous season which threatened famine, that they became generally cultivated in most part of the island. Here, however, their progress was so slow, that we find them mentioned in 1619 as one of the articles provided for the queen's table, at the price of 2*s.* per lb.! and they were for a long time only grown as delicacies in the gardens of men of fortune. Indeed more than a century elapsed ere they were much noticed; for, although they were brought before the public as an object of national importance at a meeting of the Royal Society held in March 1663, yet they are not included in the list of vegetables described in the 'Complete Gardener,' which was published by eminent London nurserymen in 1719; and we learn, from the General Agricultural Report of Scotland that their cultivation was very little understood there, even in gardens, until after the year 1740, nor practised in the fields until nearly twenty years later.

In whatever way it may have been brought into general cultivation, it may be justly considered as the most valuable esculent root with which we are acquainted; for whether regarded as the food of man or beast, its adaptation to almost every variety of palate and constitution, renders it universally welcome. There may indeed, be some truth in the observations which have been made by the late Mr. Cobbett upon the pauperizing effects which its habitual use has occasioned among the peasantry of Ireland; but in this country, where it only comes in aid of other food, it adds materially to the comforts of the working classes, and cannot be looked upon in any other light than as a national benefit.

Every one is aware that the roots or tubers, which is the edible part, grow underground, of very irregular form and size; though when planted upon land of the same nature, always producing potatoes of similar quality when the seasons do not materially differ. It is, however, not generally known that the varieties brought to our markets are so numerous, that one account has been lately presented to the Highland Society of experiments made upon 130 different sorts; another has been published by the Agricultural Society of Geneva, containing details by Professor De Candolle, of properties and produce of 154 species collected from various parts of Europe and America; and there are besides these the records of numberless trials in the county surveys of the United Kingdom, and the transactions of the London Horticultural Society. Now as the qualites of the root when grown in the usual way do not vary, it is evident that these varieties can only be produced by pursuing a different process of planting, as thus—the haulm or stem of the plant, which springs from the tuber, carries a small fruit, called "the apple," which is about the size and appearance of a green plumb, but containing many seeds, which, when again sown, produce new plants; and, singular as it may appear, frequently bear roots of a kind nearly distinct from each other in weight, flavour, and those properties which constitute their chief value.

It will be readily imagined that great advantages may be gained by the production of a superior species; and accordingly trials are constantly made by farmers and gardeners with a view to obtain them; but the operation is slow. For this purpose a few large ripe apples should be chosen from a perfectly healthy plant of an approved kind, and preserved carefully throughout the winter in dry sand, so as to keep them apart from each other. In the beginning of April the seeds should be either picked out from the apples and sown in narrow drills or rows in a prepared bed of garden-mould, or the apples and sand may be mashed up together, and sown in the drills without the trouble of separation.

When the seedling plants are about an inch high, they should be raised carefully, with as much earth as possible adhering to their roots, and planted out in rich and well-pulverized ground, the rows being about fifteen inches wide, and the plants standing ten inches asunder, keeping them clear of weeds both by the hoe and hand-weeding; and when ripe the roots should be cautiously secured from frost, either in an outhouse well covered with straw, or in a pit well guarded from the weather.

Next season the roots should be planted out in the common soil of the farm, which, however, should be of a dry, sandy, and friable nature, and the cultivation should be carried on in the ordinary manner. The potatoes will then arrive at their full size, when their distinctive properties can be ascertained; and whether only those of the former quality, or any new varieties of a better kind are thus procured, it will be found that those grown from seed will continue for several years to yield a larger return than those planted in the usual way, as well as to be more free from the destuctive disorder called the "curl,"

Besides what we have here stated regarding the ignorance which prevails respecting the seed of the potatoe, among persons who only see the roots upon their table, it is not improbable that many of those who are conversant with rural affairs are yet unacquainted with the extensive uses to which it is applied when manufactured into flour; for the public are not aware that it is not only very generally mixed by bakers in our bread, as well as made into starch, but that the substances commonly sold in shops as tapioca, arrow-root, and various other farinaceous compounds, are in many instances formed of that alone. The bakers are thus accused of adulteration; but the fact is, that, when only a moderate quantity is employed, it improves the lightness of the bread, as well as that of all kinds of pastry; and in Paris, where the bread is well known to be of very superior quality, upwards

of 40,000 tons of potatoes are annually converted into flour. When manufactured upon a large scale, means are necessarily resorted to for the reduction of labour, the process of which it is unnecessary that we should describe; but when prepared for family use, the mode may be described as simply peeling off the skin, together with the eyes or any spots by which the root may be discoloured, and then rubbing down the pulp with a strong, rough-holed iron grater, by which means it will be converted into a soft, watery mass, and is to be thrown into a tub of cold water. It should be then well mixed with the hand; after which it should be poured through a drainer, to remove any coarse fragments of the potatoe which may be accidentally present. After being allowed to remain for some time,—until the flour is completely fallen to the bottom,—the water is to be carefully poured off, and the deposit in like manner subjected to repeated ablutions of cold water, which will gradually dissolve all the soluble matter of the root, and must be persisted in until the water, which was at first turbid, becomes quite clear and transparent, some time being of course allowed to elapse between these operations, that the flour may subside completely to the bottom of the tub. It is completely insoluble in cold water, and, when perfectly white and pure, form a consitent mass, which is then spread out upon a cloth or other contrivance for drying it; and by rubbing it with the hand as it dries, it falls down into a fine impalpable powder, constituting the potatoe-flour. If kept in a dry place, this may be preserved for any length of time; and from the commencement until the termination of the process, the operation may perhaps occupy a week.

Chemist have found, by analysis, that 100 parts of the potatoe, when deprived of its skin, contain 68 to 72 parts of water, and 28 to 32 parts of insoluble matter, consisting of starch, fibrous matter, and soluble mucliage, which together constitute the flour, the amount and quality of which depend greatly on the mealiness of the root. When used in the manufacture of bread, it should be mixed with a considerable portion of rye, or wheaten flour; but a very palatable loaf may be formed with about one-third potatoe-meal and two-thirds of that of wheat. Thus it is stated in a late Number of the 'Bulletin des Sciences Agricoles,' that $4\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. of the former and 10 lbs. of the latter produce, as nearly as possible, 25 lbs. of bread, or six full-weight quartern loves. The leaven is prepared in the usual manner; but the dough requires to be rather more kneaded in order to make it rise. The same account further says, that the dough is divided into portions not larger than 6 lbs., which are baked in small pans. The oven is left shut for a quarter of an hour, after which it is partially opened for some time; and, when the bread has had sufficient time to bake well, it is removed. In half an hour it is again placed in the oven, and allowed to remain an hour, the door being left open during the time,—this second baking, it is to be observed, being of great importance. The bread made in this manner is described as of excellent quality, and may be kept for eight or ten days without any apparent alteration. Now, according to all common calculation, the proportion of household bread made from any given quantity of wheaten flour is as four to three, consequently 10 lbs, would only yield at the most $13\frac{1}{3}$ lbs. of bread; yet we here find that, by the admixture of $4\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. of good potatoe-meal, an increase is obtained of $11\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.

Puddings made with potatoe-flour closely resemble those formed of arrow-root; and a very nutritious article of food for individuals of every age, but particulary for that of childhood, or persons of weak digestion, may be prepared in the same manner as blanc-mange, in the proportion of one large cupful of the meal to eight of milk, the flour being well mixed up with a spoonful or two of cold milk before it is put on the fire to boil, and afterwards allowed to cool. If the juice of any acidulous fruit, such as raspberries, currants, or especially cranberries, be employed instead of milk, a jelly is also thus formed, which will be found an elegant and agreeable appendage to the table. One word may also be added to notable housewives upon the essential point of boiling potatoes:—they should be chosen as nearly as possible of the same size; and, if very large, they should be cut into halves or quarters. They should be put into an iron pot, with a good handful of coarse salt; and the water—which should be quite cold—should not be allowed to quite cover them; nor should the lid be closed. When about half done, those at the bottom should be removed to the top; and when the whole appear completely done, the water should be instantly poured off and the potatoes left in a napkin, within the pot, by the side of the fire. The boiling of those of moderate size generally takes about three quarters of an hour; and their being done to the heart can only be ascertained by thrusting a fork through one of them. Cooks generally follow one rule,—either peeling them or boiling them in their *jackets*; but this is wrong; for some sorts are better in their skins, and others peeled and the difference can only be ascertained by experience.

THE MONTH OF MARY.

Hail Virgin pure,
Mother most dear,
True help of Christians,
Dispelling all fear.

Behold earth's gay blossoms
On flower and tree,
Brings round the season
Sacred to thee.

Hail thou sweet flower,
Lily most pure,
Thy incense so fragrant
For e'er shall endure.

Behold now all nature
Teeming with life—
Each sparkling dew-drop
With sweetness is rife.

Hail rose resplendent,
Mystical Spring
Salvation's advent,
Peace to us bring.

Behold we aspire,
And hope not in vain
Perpetual summer
In heav'n to obtain.

Hail Sacred Spring-tide,
Dawning of day;
To eternal sunshine
Guide us, we pray.

All glory to Jesus
Thine own blessed Son,
To Father and Spirit
Alike Three in one.

Mother most pure, Pray for us.

Edmund.

St. Gregory relates of the abbot Stephen, that he had conceived so great a love for injuries, calumnies, and torments, that whenever he suffered anv, he imagined he had made a great gain, and returned heartfelt thanks to the person from whom he had suffered them: and thus it was that he attained so great a reputation for sanctity, that whoever injured him, felt certain he had made him his friend.

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